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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fifteen members of the Human Rights Council

Letter dated 8 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of Ukraine has decided to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council for the term 2008-2011 at the elections to be held during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly.

I therefore have the honour to forward an aide-memoire outlining Ukraine's voluntary commitments and pledges with respect to the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 (see annex).

I would appreciate it if the present letter and aide-memoire could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Yuriy **Sergeyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 8 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

[Original: Arabic, English, French and Spanish]

Voluntary commitments and pledges on human rights in accordance with resolution 60/251

As a founding Member of the United Nations and responsible partner of international cooperation, Ukraine is strongly committed to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and Universal Declaration on Human Rights, and strictly adheres to its international commitments under these and other international instruments in the field of human rights.

Ukraine was a member of the UN Commission of Human Rights in 1947-1971, 1983-1985, 1989-1991, 1996-1998, 2003-2005 and was then elected in 2006 to the Human Rights Council for a limited 2-year term.

Ukraine's vast experience within both the Commission and Council is a valuable asset for furthering efforts directed towards finalizing the Council's institution building on a basis of constructive dialogue and cooperation.

Ukraine has fulfilled all of its previously undertaken voluntary pledges and commitments, particularly by active participation in establishing the Universal Periodic Review, as well as by extension of a standing and open invitation to all special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Since June 2006 Ukraine has been visited by:

- Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Pornography and Child Prostitution, Mr. H.M.Petit (23-27 October 2006);
- Special Rapporteur on Adverse Effects of the Illicit Movement and Dumping of Toxic and Dangerous Products and Wastes on the enjoyment of human rights, Mr. O.Ibeanu (22-30 January 2007);
- Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, Mr. A.Ligabo (14-19 May 2007).

In fulfilment of its previous pledges and commitments, Ukraine presented to the appropriate UN bodies four national reports on implementation of the following international instruments:

- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (11-14 August 2006);
- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (7-10 May 2007);
- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (23 October 2006);
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (4 June 2007).

Ukraine has ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (21 July 2006), and acceded to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aimed at the abolition of the death penalty (16 March 2007).

Ukraine has acceded to and ratified nearly all international treaties and agreements in the field of human rights, including six major UN Conventions on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and most of their Optional Protocols.[a]

In the context of developing international human rights instruments, Ukraine has strongly supported the adoption of the Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the Convention on the Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities.

The primary focus of Ukraine's humanitarian policy is the universal promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in line with the UN Millennium Goals. Ukraine considers civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights as indivisible, interdependent, interrelated and as an indispensable foundation for democracy, development, and good governance.

As a member of the Human Rights Council, Ukraine submits itself fully to the Universal Periodic Review and undertakes following voluntary commitments and pledges.

Within the Council and the United Nations system Ukraine will:

- work to ensure elimination of double standards in the assessment of the human rights situation in various countries;
- strive to promote objectivity and non-selectivity in the functioning of the Council;
- engage in a constructive and transparent human rights dialogue with all states and NGO;
- continue to support the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights;
- further contribute to developing modalities of the Universal Periodic Review and to strengthening the institutional make-up of the Council;
- support the work of the Expert Advice Committee of the Council;
- cooperate constructively with the UN Member States in reforming the UN treaty-body system;
- seek to increase support to initiatives and resolutions aimed at protecting children's rights;
- further support activities that combat violence against women and the international trafficking in human beings;

[a] See attachment.

- continue to support the drafting of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in order to provide a communication procedure for the rights emanating from this treaty;

- continue to fully cooperate with the UN special procedures and Special Rapporteurs and Independent Experts of the HRC, and to implement the recommendations addressed to Ukraine.

At the bilateral level, Ukraine will:

- actively cooperate with all states – regardless of their membership in the Council – in order to reflect their views with regard to the ongoing deliberations within the Council;

- contribute to facilitating the interaction between the Council and individual countries;

- ensure that the Council provides advisory services, technical assistance, and capacity-building in consultation with, and with the consent of states concerned.

Domestically, Ukraine will:

- continue to strengthen a close engagement and partnership between the Government and civil society in promoting and protecting human rights;

- encourage efforts by civil society and the media in promoting and protecting human rights;

- ensure effective protection and promotion of the rights of national minorities and indigenous peoples;

- further strengthen activities that protect children's rights and advance women and gender equality;

- timely submit national periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

- ratify the Convention on Promoting the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, its Optional Protocol; and the Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.

Attachment

Human Rights treaties ratified by Ukraine

United Nations

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR);
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR);
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR-OP1);
- Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aimed at the abolition of the death penalty (CCPR-OP2-DP);
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD);
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW-OP);
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT);
- Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT-OP);
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC);
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC-OP-AC) on the involvement of children in armed conflict;
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC-OP-SC) on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

International Labour Organization

- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No.29);
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105);
- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No.87);
- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No.98);
- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No.100);
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No.111);
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No.138);
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No.182).

Council of Europe

- European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
- Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
- Protocol No. 2 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, conferring upon the European Court of Human Rights competence to give advisory opinions;

- Protocol No. 3 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, amending Articles 29, 30 and 34 of the Convention;
- Protocol No. 4 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, securing certain rights and freedoms other than those already included in the Convention and in the first Protocol thereto;
- Protocol No. 5 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, amending Articles 22 and 40 of the Convention;
- Protocol No. 6 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms concerning the Abolition of the Death Penalty;
- Protocol No. 7 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
- Protocol No. 8 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms;
- European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- Protocol No. 1 to the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- Protocol No. 2 to the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
- Protocol No. 11 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, restructuring the control machinery established thereby;
- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities;
- European Agreement relating to persons participating in proceedings of the European Court of Human Rights;
- Protocol No. 13 to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, concerning the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances.